

FIVE THEATERS FEATURE FAMILIAR NAMES.

Behind the Footlights

Alfred Suto, the English playwright, has come to stage his latest effort, "The Fascinating Mr. Vanderveldt," which will be produced for the first time in this country tomorrow night in New York with Miss Ellis Jeffrey, the English actress, in the principal role. Suto says he wants to dramatize John D. Rockefeller.

Wilton Lackaye is again winning success in a revival of "Tribby." The actor's interpretation of the role of Svenzall is said to have lost none of its power and the Chicago theater, where the play is running, is sold out for days ahead. Jane Oaker plays Tribby.

Henry Miller has surrounded himself with an unusually competent company for "Gerson's Wav," the Henry V. Esmond play, in which he returned to the stage last Thursday night. Included in the company are Rebecca Warren, Guy Standing, Henry Woodruff, Ida Waterman, and Fred Thorne.

Charles Frohman has selected Baltimore as the place, and January 22 as the time for the first performance of the biblical play "Mizpah." In the company there will be Adele Block, J. H. Gilmour, Stanley Dark, Ralph Delmore, and Olive Oliver.

"A Midsummer Eve's Dream," is the title of a new play which will be brought out by the Shuberts next April. The play is by Evelyn Greenleaf Sutherland and was rejected as unavailable by David Belasco.

Marie Wainwright is the latest addition which will present "The Tranceo Trail." She will play the part for which Mary Shaw was first announced.

Hattie Williams will be one of Charles Frohman's stars in future. Mr. Frohman is now engaging the company which will support Miss Williams when she takes to the stellar path.

Frank Rushworth, who signs the tenor role in "Fantana," with Jefferson de Angeli, is out of the cast for several weeks. The actor fell a few days ago and injured his knee and an understudy will play his part until he recovers.

Margaret Illington (Mrs. Daniel Frohman) and Arthur Byron will play the principal parts in "The Lion and the Mouse," when it is presented in Chicago early in February.

Maude Adams' engagement in "Peter Pan," at the Empire Theater, New York, has proved so successful that her appearance in Boston, which was scheduled for next month, has been indefinitely postponed.

"Noah's Ark" is another of the mythical childhood plays which are becoming so popular. "Noah's Ark" was recently produced at the Waldorf Theater, London, under the management of the Shuberts, and is accredited with success. Maude Lessing and Harry Paulson play the principal roles.

Martin Harvey, the English actor, who will be remembered here for his good work in "The Only Way," has engaged as stage manager Harry J. Lovelady, who for years acted in the same capacity for the late Sir Henry Irving.

London is just now in the midst of the pantomime craze. There are between twenty and thirty productions of this kind on the boards, but the best and biggest is said to be "Cinderella" at the Drury Lane. May de Sousa, an American actress, plays the title role.

Edwin Arden, one of Washington's stage favorites, has been engaged for an important part in "The House of Silence," which James K. Hackett will produce in the near future.

It will be agreeable to the many local friends of Katherine Naeff to learn that her remarkable voice is winning her new admirers throughout the Southern States. Miss Naeff was recently seen in this city in the cast of "The Sign of the Cross" Company. Besides handling a part with dramatic skill, she sang the sacred melodies in the second act of that production. Possessed of a voice of great range and beauty, her efforts met with generous approval, and the praise she is now winning from critics and public is only bearing out the future predicted for her by those who heard her on the occasion of her last local appearance.

John Philip Sousa and Harry B. Smith are putting the finishing touches to their latest musical offering, "The Free Lance." The piece will be produced in New York early in the spring.

"Shore Acres" is to be put on in London with Cyril Maude and Winifred Emery. The production will be made by the Shuberts, who will undoubtedly have to amortize the play into one of English rather than American rural life.

Ada Lewis, who will be recalled as a prominent member of May Irwin's earlier companies, has been engaged for an important role in "The Press Agent," in which Peter F. Daley is now starring.

Charles Richman will again become a star, this time in a play called "The Gallop Hunt Ball." The play is being staged by Victor Mapes.

The first performance of George Cohan's latest play, "George Washington, Jr.," will be given in Springfield next Wednesday night. The scenes are laid at Mt. Vernon, Va., the Willard Hotel, Washington, and at a private residence in Providence. Eugene O'Rourke and Jerry Cohan, father of the star and author, will play the roles of United States Senators.

E. S. Willard played to capacity business throughout his engagement in

Pittsburgh last week. The return of the English actor was signaled by a tremendous advance sale, and, it is said, the S. R. O. sign worked overtime.

W. L. Abington, who came over from England several years ago to play important roles with Amelia Bingham, has been engaged to support Charles Richman in "The Gallop Hunt Ball."

N. C. Goodwin is to return to the London stage next month in an Angli-cized version of his old success, "A Gilded Fool." He will be under the direction of Thomas W. Hiley. If the production is a success the engagement will be extended indefinitely and will present Goodwin in a series of revivals.

The Shuberts have obtained the American rights to "Veronique" and will next season send the piece on the road with an American cast. The company which is now presenting the musical comedy will sail for the other side early next month.

It now develops that there never was the slightest chance for the Divine Sarah to play in a circus tent, after all. It had been stated with a good deal of emphasis that the trust had refused to book Mme. Bernhardt in any of their houses, and it had caused a good deal of feeling, so much so that Richard Mansfield wired Klaw & Erlanger to know the truth of the matter. The trust managers made this reply: "We fear that you have been imposed upon. Mme. Bernhardt's managers have a circuit of theaters of their own and are not applying to us for any dates. There is neither danger nor necessity of her playing in tents."

Richard Harding Davis is nothing if not original. It is no uncommon thing to dramatize a novel, but it is rather unusual to novelize a drama, and this is what Mr. Davis proposes to do with his new play, "The Galloper," in which Raymond Hitchcock has been right successful on the road.

Mme. Fremstad, the famous prima donna is certain that she has solved the servant question. She has a valet who she declares is an artist in the combination of colors. The singer declared recently: "I wouldn't think of going back to maids again. He never appears with a headache when I am particularly rushed, and when I am nervous, his placidity is most soothing. He is not forever thinking of his best young man, and I can always depend upon him. He has mastered the art of serving and saves me an enormous amount of bother and worry."

Houdini's Latest "Stunt."

Harry Houdini, "the handcuff king," went from Chase's to Philadelphia and his original engagement of two weeks has been extended to a third, ending next Saturday night. In a recent issue the Philadelphia Item printed the following article that will be interesting here.

"E. Markey, J. Wisenbaur, A. Wisenbaum, Robert Lippincott, A. Anderson, R. Winkenshaw, and J. Hiler are seven of the most surprised men in Philadelphia today. Houdini is most mysterious. He is not forever thinking of his best young man, and I can always depend upon him. He has mastered the art of serving and saves me an enormous amount of bother and worry."

"The men named in the first paragraph are seven of N. Snellenburg & Co.'s most expert packers and hatters. Early in the week they conceived the idea that Houdini's act, in which he escapes from a tightly-locked and roped-around trunk, was a 'fake,' and they sent him a formal challenge to allow them to produce a packing box into which he would allow himself to be nailed and then see if he could escape. Houdini accepted the challenge and last night the men appeared with one of the strongest half-inch boxes used by the big firm and fastened by double the usual number of long wire nuts. Houdini examined the box critically and then requested the men to again go over the box and put in some more nails and clinch them on the inside. Assisted by a committee of ten men selected from the audience and headed by former Police Captain John W. Emery, the seven experts, with their own hammers and nails, proceeded to make the box more secure. Then Houdini lightly leaped inside the case and the men proceeded not only to nail down the lid, but to tie the box up with a long rope. It looked impossible for even a sheet of paper to get out of the box and the committee returned to their seats on the stage with self-satisfied smiles and a 'get out of that if you can' expression on their faces.

The curtains were drawn, and as minute after minute passed and no sound or motion was heard from behind the screen, the looks changed to those of conviction that at last the wonder was literally and figuratively 'in a box.' At the expiration of 15 minutes and 50 seconds, however, the curtain was thrown suddenly aside and Houdini appeared. He was there, but he was a wreck. Beads of perspiration stood out on his forehead, his shirt was torn and one half of his collar was in place. Quickly taking the obstructions away the box was seen precisely as it was when laid in public view, and not a knot or nail was disturbed. The audience was spellbound. So overwhelmed was it that not one applauded for at least two minutes, but when the signal of approval was started it kept the magician bowing for at least a quarter of an hour. The committee was the first to congratulate Houdini on his great work, and the members snook hands gingerly with Houdini, as though afraid that he was not real flesh and blood. Now they want to know how he did it."



Stage Gossip From Gotham Offerings at the Theaters

BY JAMES GRANT THURSTON.

NEW YORK, Jan. 20.—For the first time since the season began nothing new was presented to the theatergoers of New York this week; that is, no new plays. There were, nevertheless, several revivals which were of more than passing interest. The most important of these was the presentation of "Old Lavender" by Edward Harrigan at the Yorkville Theater. In looking over the play bill I find none of the old names of those who made the name of Harrigan and Hart a household word a generation ago to New York theatergoers. Nevertheless, Mr. Harrigan has gathered a very acceptable company of players and the reception to the famous old author and player was all that he could have desired.

Low Dockstader also opened a two weeks' engagement, and with his sixty players gave his usual minstrel show which was worth while. Mrs. Leslie Carter went over to the Academy of Music, where she will play a six weeks' engagement in repertoire, including "Adieu," "Zaza," and "Di Larry." Herrietta Crossman gave a very acceptable rendition of "As You Like It" at the Garrick Theater, Thursday night.

I said there was nothing new. This applied most particularly to Broadway, as a matter of fact, there were no new presentations during the week. Mr. Connel presented at the Irving Place Theater, Thursday, the Berlin and Vienna success, "Der Kilometerfresser," a very pretty three-act farce, and at the Fourteenth Street Theater "Bedford's Hope," a lurid melodrama by Lincoln J. Carter.

The ninth week of grand opera continued with unabated success. On Monday night "Aida" was sung with Nordica and Caruso in the cast. On Wednesday night the bill was "La Sonnambula." On Thursday afternoon "Parsifal," and Friday night "Trovatore." Saturday afternoon, "Lucia Di Lammermoor," and on Saturday night "La Boheme." Bessie Abbott made her New York debut in the last named work.

If there was little new in matters theatrical it may be said that the old favorites are all splendidly patronized, and

the man in the boxoffice has no complaint to make. The one possible exception was "Cashel Byron's Profession," in which former champion James J. Corbett narrowly escaped a knockout. Whether the lack of patronage was due to the fact that Bernard Shaw's "professional" plays do not set well with New York players or the combination of Corbett and Shaw with the memory of Augustin Daly, was a little too much to be taken seriously, the fact remains that Manager Henry B. Harris decided to withdraw the play after this week. Before time was called, however, Mr. Corbett recovered from the solar plexus and Manager Harris was induced to try him a little longer at the Majestic Theater. If James J. doesn't go at the uptown house, the former champion will probably return to vaudeville, for a while, at least.

Another obituary which needs to be written is that of Hall Caine's "Prodigal Son." The theater-going public in the provinces persistently refuses to butcher the fatted calf, and I understand that the management has decided that the great American public wants none of the fatted calf.

Another English playwright has come to this country with the idea of putting John D. Rockefeller on the stage. Not in person of course. Alfred Suto is the man. He frankly admits his purpose to build a play about the great Standard Oil magnate as soon as he has time. If he has any difficulty in getting necessary material, Attorney General Hadley, of Missouri, may be able to show him. If the Missouriian hasn't all the information about to be secured about Mr. Rockefeller and the Standard Oil, it certainly is not his fault.

Ada Rehan is happy. After litigation which has been in progress, the courts have decided that she is entitled to one-fifth of the revenue derived from the estate of the late Augustin Daly. The executors of the estate insisted that she was entitled to a fifth of the fixed assets only. This decision will add materially to Miss Rehan's wealth.

National—Lawrence D'Orsay in "The Embassy Ball."

Daniel Frohman will present Lawrence D'Orsay for a week's engagement at the National Theater beginning tomorrow evening in Augustus Thomas' new comedy, "The Embassy Ball." This will be the first presentation of this comedy in its present form. While "The Embassy Ball" is, of course, general in its scope, plot, and story, to Washingtonians it can be regarded as particularly local. The scenes and action of the play take place in this city. It is a comedy in three acts, and is reputed to be faithful and characteristic portrayal of Washington life, depicting as it does many scenes and incidents of both social and political affairs. Augustus Thomas may well be considered the most conspicuous and leading American playwright of the present time. He has contributed to the stage a good list of delightful comedies. A few of them may be mentioned: "The Earl of Pawtucket," "Alabama," "Arizona," "On the Quiet," "In Mizouza," "Mrs. Lefingwell's Boots," and others. The author did not write his play without first becoming acquainted with the Capital City. Before he began work upon it he spent some months here familiarizing himself with both political and social affairs. He did not write the play in haste. It has been, probably, two years since he made his visit here, and at odd times ever since he has devoted himself to its construction.

Mr. D'Orsay is by no means a stranger to Washington theatergoers. He has appeared here upon several occasions. His first professional visit to Washington was with Miss Annie Russell, taking the role of the King in "A Royal Family." Mr. D'Orsay is perhaps better known in the United States in connection with one of Mr. Thomas' other plays, "The Earl of Pawtucket," in which he appeared as the star for three seasons. "The Earl of Pawtucket" was written expressly for Mr. D'Orsay, as was also "The Embassy Ball." Mr. D'Orsay and Mr. Thomas have long been great personal friends, and the author in "The Earl of Pawtucket" wrote what has since become known as a D'Orsay part. He has done the same

thing in "The Embassy Ball." The actor being an Englishman, has in "The Embassy Ball" a role most suitable to him. It is that of the military attaché of the British Embassy in Washington.

He has previously filled this office, representing the British government in Paris. While there he meets a fascinating American girl. In truth he becomes acquainted with three young American women, all of whom are friends and living together in the French capital. This is the starting point of the comedy. Later the military attaché is transferred to Washington, and then comes the development of the real story and plot of the play. Two of the scenes are presumably located not far from the British Embassy, the other takes place in the apartments of Senator Bender of Oregon, at the Arlington Hotel. In introducing Senator Bender from one of the far Western States, the author, it is said, has created quite an original character, typifying Senatorial representation in Congress from the Golden Coast of the Pacific. The Oregon Senator is in no way exaggerated. He is an excellent specimen of sturdy integrity, who may, however, lack something in social polish, but he is a true American.

Mr. Frohman has selected for Mr. D'Orsay's principal associate players, Miss Charlotte Walker, George Clarke, Miss Rose Hubbard, Forrest Robinson, Miss Marian Barney, Walter Hitchcock, Miss Ida Darling, and Harold Heaton.

Belasco—Thos. Q. Seabrooke in "Mexicana."

All the torrid and sensuous charm of our sister republic to the south is revealed in "Mexicana," the "tropical topical" comic opera that will be presented under the direction of Messrs. Shubert at the Belasco Theater the coming week by a large, capable and popular company headed by Thomas Q. Seabrooke and Christie MacDonald, and embracing such gifted comedians, dancers and singers as Joseph Herbert, Blanche Deyo, Caro Rome, Mayme Kelso, Edward Marshall, and Edmund Stanley. Melody, humor, color, action, rhyme, and picturesqueness are the dominant characteristics of the play. The locale is scenically beautiful, the situations are

comic with a fascinating leaven of romance, the climaxes presenting a clever intermingling of the humorous and the dramatic. The ensembles are gorgeous and kaleidoscopic, reflecting the changeful, vivid hues of inanimate nature and of humanity under the southern sun.

The most fascinating life of any country is its feminine life. It is natural then that girls are a prominent feature of "Mexicana." The play simply abounds in girls. Vaquero girls in sombreroes; Cowboy girls in chaperos and with lassos; flower girls with their fragrant wares; peasant girls, or peons, in gaudy national dress; and high born señoritas in silken finery and lace mantillas. All these girls can sing and dance. They have the grace, the ardor and the passion of the tropics as well as its love of color and bizarre effects.

Mr. Seabrooke and Mr. Herbert, two comedians of diametrically different types, are both fitted with roles giving them ample scope to display their superabundant abilities. "Mexicana," Mr. Herbert impersonates a Wall Street broker who goes to Mexico to look after mining interests and is the shadow of the revolutionists. Incidentally he discovers that the inclination for "graft" is confined to the district of the revolutionists of Trinity Church and of the headquarters of the big life insurance companies. The exact science of "graft" is cleverly satirized throughout. "Mexicana," Mr. Herbert plays an old Mexican army captain who is more amorous than military. Miss MacDonald has a prominent role as a vendor of pottery who adopts masculine attire to aid her lover, who is the real head of the revolutionary movement. Miss Deyo has an ingenue part which permits her to sing an interesting song of two and to introduce her famous dances.

The Mexicans are one of the most music loving of peoples and their music has pronounced national characteristics. That written for this play by Raymond Hubbell, composer of "Mexicana," and of "Fantana," has the distinctive Mexican rhythm and sensuousness. The libretto and lyrics were written by Miss Clara Driscoll, the famous young Texas literary woman and patriot who recently saved the Alamo at San Antonio to her State and who is now custodian of the historic building.

Columbia—Chauncey Olcott in "Edmund Burke."

The coming of Chauncey Olcott, the romantic singing comedian, to the Columbia this week, has a double interest for his many admirers, for he will present a new play by Theodore Burr Sayre, entitled "Edmund Burke," and every new play which he produces means new songs. The title character is said to fit Mr. Olcott's romantic and picturesque style, the period being of the eighteenth century, which affords opportunity for beautiful costumes and scenery.

At the opening of the play Burke is acting as tutor in the family of Lord Nugent, a high temperance and nobleman. While teaching the younger members of the family he falls in love with Mary Nugent, the adopted daughter of Lord Nugent. She reciprocates his love, believing the handsome and brilliant young fellow has a bright future before him. Another suitor pays her court, and he discovers that he has a dangerous rival in the tutor, and informs Lord Nugent of his daughter's love affair, then Burke is dismissed from the house. He goes to humble lodgings and earns but a trifle with his pen. While living in his poverty-stricken rooms he is secretly visited by Mary Nugent. She is seen to leave the rooms by the Prince of Wales, who is going about London incognito. He is at once fascinated by her beauty, and is told she is the wife of a poor scribbler. He orders her to be abducted and sent to a certain house in the outskirts of London. This is done, and when Burke learns by whose orders she was taken he hastens to save her from the royal rascal. He succeeds in finding this house and gains admission. In saving the girl whom he returns unharmed, to her father, he also saves the prince from a conspiracy and then begins Burke's great rise in politics. He becomes the idol of the people and a leader in the house of commons, and during the reign of the Second George of England was known to be the power behind the throne. In the play humor and pathos are neatly woven, and the mingling of children's sweet voices are heard and Mr. Olcott's well-known gentleness with little tots will be in evidence.

"You Can Suffer in My Boat," "The Little Bird's Story," "Miss Mary," and "Your Heart Alone Must Tell" are the titles of Mr. Olcott's new songs.

Chase—Harry Tate, John C. Rice, and Sally Cohen. Chase's will be the Mecca of Washington auto-mobilers this week, owing to the fact that "Motoring," a burlesque on the "buzz-wagon" sport, will be one of the special attractions. It will be pre-